

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

21 March 1985

MEMORANDUM:

SUBJECT : Greece's Electoral System

1. Since 1974, Greece has had a reinforced proportional election system. The system was designed to prevent the fragmentation of political parties and the emergence of unstable coalitions.

2. In mid-January Prime Minister Papandreu unveiled a new election law which (despite some cosmetic changes) essentially preserves reinforced proportional representation. The conservative opposition, New Democracy, immediately announced its satisfaction with the proposed law. The Communists and other small leftwing parties, in contrast, criticized Papandreu for failing to implement the simple proportional system he had originally promised.

3. Under the new system:

- The Parliament has 300 deputies. Twelve are "state" deputies who are not tied to a specific constituency (district).
- Post-electoral apportionment of seats requires several mathematical calculations and involves three rounds of distribution.
- In the first round, the country is divided into 56 electoral districts. An "electoral quota" is determined by dividing the total number of valid votes cast in the district by the number of seats allotted to the district, plus one. (Seats are apportioned among the

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districts according to their population). Each party is then assigned seats equivalent to the number of times the "quota" will go into that party's electoral strength in the district.

- The first distribution usually leaves some seats unassigned and a second distribution occurs. In the second round, the country is divided into 10 districts. All parties participate in the second distribution (unlike the old system where a party needed 17 percent of the popular vote nationwide to participate). However, participation is on the basis of each party's total vote rather than the votes "left-over" after the first distribution (as was the case under the old system). Thus, parties with large numbers of votes are still favored.
- Seats distributed in the third round go to the party that finishes first nationwide if that party also finished first in the district where the seat is located. Otherwise, left-over seats are distributed according to the percentage each party received nationally.
- The twelve at-large seats are divided proportionally among those parties receiving more than 8.3 percent of the popular vote.

4. Under the new system, a party that receives 40-42 percent of the popular vote (provided it leads its nearest opponent by about 2 percent) could form a majority government.

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GREEK PARLIAMENT
DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS*

If the June 1984 Europarlament elections had been national elections, the distribution of seats in Parliament would have looked as follows under the new electoral law:

	<u>Europarlament Percent Vote</u>	<u>Under Old Law Number Seats</u>	<u>Under New Law Number Seats</u>	<u>Under Simple Proportional Number Seats</u>
PASOK	42	151-152	157	126
New Democracy	38	133-136	126	114
KKE	12	13-14	16	36
KKE Interior	3	0-1	1	9
Other Parties	5	0	0	15

*Figures are approximate and are based on US Embassy reporting and our own rough calculations.

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1981 Greek Elections

	% Vote	#Seats (as of Oct 1981)	#Seats (as of March 1985)
Pasok	48	172	165
New Democracy	36	115	112
KKE	11	13	13
Other	5	0	10

*Change in seats between 1981 and 1985 reflects party defections.

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